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REP. WAXMAN PRESENTS THE "GOLDEN JACKPOT"
AWARD TO PRESIDENT BUSH

Rep. Henry A. Waxman (D-CA) today presented the "Golden Jackpot" award to President Bush for his decision to reject California's request for a waiver of the gasoline oxygenate requirements. The effect of the President's action is to force California drivers to put corn-derived ethanol in their gas tanks. The Golden Jackpot is given in recognition of indefensible government decisions that benefit special interests at the expense of the public interest.

Rep. Waxman explained that there were two outstanding nominees for the award. "The first nominee is the Pacific Gas and Electric Company, which is insisting on giving its senior executives over \$65 million in bonuses at the same time the utility is filing for bankruptcy. That's a pretty good reward for a management team that both helped create the California energy crisis and drove the company into bankruptcy.

"The second nominee, President Bush, has been faced with a choice on gasoline for California. By granting a waiver the state requested regarding oxygenate requirements, he could have lowered gasoline prices, increased gasoline supply, and ensured that gasoline would cause less air pollution.

"Instead, urged on by Archer-Daniels-Midland and other special interests, the President rejected the waiver. So now California families may face a second energy crisis -- we may have gasoline shortages, gasoline prices will go up, and we won't cut air pollution."

Rep. Waxman said, "It was a difficult decision to choose between the nominees, but the Golden Jackpot goes to President Bush. Special interests win and California families take it on the chin. Again."

In 1999, California Governor Gray Davis requested the waiver. California presented EPA with exhaustive scientific, technical, and analytical documentation supporting the environmental and economic benefits to California that relief from the oxygenate mandate would provide. Relief from the mandate would allow refiners to produce gasoline that meets the Clean Air Act requirements for emission reductions, but does not use MTBE, which contaminates drinking water, or ethanol, which drives up the cost of gasoline. Every member of the California House delegation -- Republicans and Democrats alike -- requested the Administration grant California's waiver request.

The first Golden Jackpot award was presented on March 28 to the mining industry and EPA Administrator Christine Todd Whitman for the incomprehensible decision to allow more arsenic in our drinking water. The second award was presented on April 4 to President Bush and Vice President Cheney on behalf of the entire Bush Cabinet for their plans to completely repeal the estate tax, which would save President Bush, Vice President Cheney, and the Bush Cabinet hundreds of millions of dollars in taxes. The third award was presented on April 26 to Secretary Abraham for his decision to roll back air conditioner efficiency standards at a time when America is facing its worst energy problem in 25 years.

The Golden Jackpot is a gold-colored metal pot, filled with chocolate gold and silver coins. The trophy is 7 ½ inches high, 6 ½ inches wide, weighs 2 lbs, 5 oz., and is filled with 129 pieces of chocolate coins.